

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 SS-15 COME-00 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 /039 W

----- 018221

R 201535Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2136

UNCLAS ALGIERS 0746

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTRA, AG

SUBJ: CHECKLIST FOR AMERICAN BUSINESS VISITORS: ALGERIA

REFS: (A) STATE A-855 AND (B) STATE 060016

1. TRADE POLICY AND LOCAL REPRESENTATION: BUSINESS IN ALGERIA IS GENERALLY DONE THROUGH INVITATIONS TO BID WHICH, ALONG WITH MAJOR PROJECTS, REPRESENT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF BUSINESS TO BE DONE BY U.S. FIRMS IN ALGERIA. HOWEVER, IN MANY CASES, BIDS ARE NOT OPENED IF THEY COME FROM A LOCAL AGENT. THE ALGERIANS CONSIDER AGENTS AS UNNECESSARY MIDDLE MEN WHO SHOULD NOT BE DEALT WITH. THUS AGENTS ARE ONLY marginally useful in this socialist economy. SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN DEAL DIRECTLY WITH THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT AGENCIES INVOLVED OR SET UP LOCAL OFFICES. THIS IN IN CONTRAST TO COMMON PRACTISE IN OTHER MIDDLE EAST COUNTRIES.

2. MAJOR PROJECTS, SUCH AS TURNKEY FACTORIES, WHICH CAN REPRESENT MILLIONS OF DOLLARS OF BUSINESS FOR U.S. FIRMS IN A SINGLE CONTRACT, ARE COMMON. THOSE OPPORTUNITIES ARE REGULARLY REPORTED BY THE EMBASSY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE. OBTAINING THESE CONTRACTS REQUIRES PERSONAL VISITS TO ALGERIA AND LONG HARD NEGOTIATIONG.

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3. KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH IS VIRTUALLY NIL IN ALGERIA.

FRENCH IS THE LANGUAGE OF BUSINESS AND ARABIC IS USEFUL,
BUT NOT MANDATORY. NON FRENCH SPEAKING VISITORS SHOULD
BE PREPARED TO HIRE INTERPRETERS.

4. THE HOTEL SITUATION IN ALGIERS IS CRITICAL. NO
BUSINESS VISITOR SHOULD ARRIVE WITHOUT CONFIRMED
RESERVATIONS. TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS ARE
ALSO PROBLEMS IN ALGIERS AND THE BUSINESS VISITOR SHOULD
BE PREPARED TO ENCOUNTER MANY FRUSTRATIONS IN THIS REGARD.

5. VISITORS SHOULD NOTE THAT ALGERIA IS ON A NORMAL
WESTERN WORK WEEK, I.E. MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY WITH
SOME OFFICES OPEN SATURDAY MORNING.PARKER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 20 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ALGIER00746
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750098-0747
From: ALGIERS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750334/aaaabees.tel
Line Count: 74
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE A-855, 75 AND STATE 060016
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hartledg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUN 2003 by JonesKG>; APPROVED <19 FEB 2004 by hartledg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHECKLIST FOR AMERICAN BUSINESS VISITORS: ALGERIA
TAGS: BTRA, AG
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006